Human sexuality spectrum

The **Sexuality Spectrum** is a proposed theory of human sexuality that posits there is a continuum that accounts for every variation of human sexuality/identity without necessarily labeling or defining all of them.[1][2][3][4][5] The spectrum provides the idea that sexuality/identity is loosely identifiable by specific means or measurements. The human sexuality spectrum contradicts sexuality binaries.

Sexuality and gender roles have primarily been based on biological and anatomical basis. Gender is generally legally based on the sex organs that the individual has, in most countries of the world if not all. Under the human sexuality spectrum system, sexuality and gender roles are found on the spectrum, the spectrum accounts for any minor variations that can be found in any given person. This system is found to be useful for many who do not like to be limited to a label. Many people find themselves deviating from a strict label. The pressure to place a label on a person's sexual or gender preferences causes stress for the person who may not fit on one of societies provided labels.

It cannot be certain if people sit on one point of the spectrum their entire life or if they move over time. Research does suggest that sexuality can move along the spectrum at any given point in a person's lifetime. The idea or hypothesis of sexual fluidity accounts for this.

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Commonly labeled sexualities

Heterosexual - Romantic or sexual attraction to only people of the opposite sex or gender

Homosexual - Romantic or sexual attraction to only people of the same sex or gender

Bisexual - Romantic or sexual attraction to both males and females, or more than one gender (not necessarily equally).

Pansexual (or omnisexual) - Romantic or sexual attraction to people regardless of sex or gender

Polysexual - Romantic or sexual attraction to multiple genders, but not all.

Gay - A term used for both homosexual males and females, especially males, or as an umbrella term for the LGBT community.

Lesbian - A term used for homosexual women or for lesbian sexual activity or lesbian behavior.

Queer - Umbrella term to describe someone who is not heterosexual or cisgender.

Asexual - Describes someone who lacks or does not experience sexual attraction.

Aromantic - Describes someone who does not experience romantic attraction.

Kinsey scale

A heterosexual to homosexual rating scale produced by Alfred Kinsey along with his colleagues Wardell Pomeroy and Clyde Martin in 1948[1]. The scale was developed as part of a theory that Americans experience diverse sexual practices that do not necessarily fit in an extreme view of the heterosexual or homosexual sexuality binary[6][7]. The horizontal scale ranges on a 0-6 continuum from exclusively heterosexual (0) on the left-hand side to exclusively homosexual (6) on the right-hand side with five steps in between[8]. A zero on the scale indicates an individual with exclusively heterosexual interests.[9] A one on the scale indicates an unintentional homosexual experience encouraged by curiosity or alcohol.[9] A one could also indicate a forced homosexual interaction.[9] A two on the scale means that an individual has homosexual and heterosexual feelings, however, the heterosexual feelings outweigh those of the homosexual.[9] A three indicated that the individual had no preference to heterosexual or homosexual feelings.[9] A four, five, and six on the spectrum mirrored the respective zero, one, and two.[9] An X-Category was established for those individuals that did not have any sexual feelings.[9] The chart is a basic scale depicting sexuality solely based on answers received by male and female interviewees asked over five-hundred questions.[9] Kinsey's model consisted of a male and female volume.[10] He found that homosexual experiences among men were present in nearly half of the respondents.[10]

The problem with the Kinsey scale is that it does not account for a lot of the sexualities that fall under the idea of queer nor does it account for gender identities. The scale is extremely linear with only a limited number of systematic steps and it only has two extremes. The scale is also based on a self-evaluation which is indefinite and subject to change over time[2]. Because of this, Kinsey believed that we should develop a way to assign a position on the scale at each point in the person's life making a person closer to death having more justifiable scores.[11] The human sexuality spectrum is more effective in how it depicts individuals as non-binary in terms of sexual feelings[12]. The Kinsey scale provides measurable data which the human sexuality spectrum is not able to do.

This scale has been further defined by other researchers. One such example is that of Michael Storms who, in 1980, created a sexuality scale including an x and y axis.[13]. Expanding scales and research allows for less one dimensional labeling.

Idea / theory of sexual fluidity

Sexuality lies on a spectrum but the theory of sexual fluidity allows for the idea of variation over time. Kinsey supported this by finding evidence in his research that people seem to find their sexuality can change over time. The idea of sexual fluidity is that sexuality does not necessarily stay in one place on the spectrum. It can vary over time depending on situations. Someone's perceived sexuality may not always fit who the person ends up being attracted to. Sexuality can bend and flow and end up surprising a person. The idea of sexual fluidity is a theory though as there is no way to prove sexuality is fluid. What can be said is that there is research based evidence of people deviating from their perceived sexuality. This supports the idea of the human sexuality spectrum as it provides evidence that sexuality does not necessarily fit on an extreme but can be found at any point in between. It is impossible to prove whether the person's sexuality changed or if their sexuality was different than they thought all along. This theory suggests that not all gay people are born gay

See also

- Gender identity

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